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"The civility of this man is wonderful: he spares us the trouble of contradicting him, by contradicting himself. Nay, he goes still further, and, by proving himself to be a liar, spares us the pain of calling him so."——POPE, LETTERS.

TO
WILLIAM ROSCOE, ESQ.
LETTER IV.

SIR,

The part of your pamphlet, which remains to be examined, is, as you state, intended to show, that a peace with France, to be made as soon as possible, upon the terms before proposed by her, is absolutely necessary to the safety of England, and that "nothing but a political suicide, a "total incapacity to meet the bounties of "Providence and to improve its blessings, "can induce us to hesitate for a moment, as "to the course we ought to pursue." If you had, by any regular chain of reasoning, founded upon admitted, or notorious, facts, endeavoured to make the truth of these assertions apparent, it would have required but a short space, wherein to answer you; but, you have mingled, or, rather, mashed up, so much of history and of other matter along with the argument which you employ, that, after much pains taken to pick out the latter from the former, I find myself obliged to follow you through thick and thin.

Amongst the fatal consequences of the Danish expedition, you mention our loss of all continental allies. "In every contest," say you, "that may henceforth take place "between France and England, British "courage *alone* must be employed, and Bri"tish blood must flow. We are now ef"fectually *deprived* of those *powerful allies*, "who hitherto engaged the attention of "our enemies, and rendered the continent "the theatre of war." Sentiments of the same turn are expressed by you elsewhere, and, it must not be forgotten, that you set a high value upon Hanover (a thing which France has to offer us), and tell us, that, if we had but accepted of Napoleon's terms of peace, we might have had our share of influence upon the continent. This is your language, and these are your sentiments, when you are endeavouring to impress your readers with an idea of the evils of the Danish expedition, and to induce them to believe, that the terms of peace, which were offered by France, were such as we ought to have accepted of. But, by-and-by you have to say something about continental connections, as considered with regard to the peace that may now be made; and then, it being your object to induce us to insist upon nothing that Buonaparté is likely to wish not to grant, your sentiments are quite altered; and you tell us, that you hope, that "fo"reign subsidies will never again be advert"ed to, but *to be execrated*." In another place, that, "if, instead of *blindly aiming* "*at continental influence and connections*, "we duly estimate our own interests, im"portance, and security, we may regard all "the efforts of France to rival us, as a ma"ritime power, without dismay. The ba"lance of power, that *chimerical source of* "*war and blood-shed*, now exists not even "in name. Let us attend more to ourselves "and less to our neighbours." All this would have been very well, if it had stood by itself; if it had not appeared in the same pamphlet with your affected lamentation at the fatal consequences of the Danish expedition, amongst which you number the *loss* of our "powerful allies upon the continent," which loss has left us, for our defence, "British courage and British blood *alone*." But, you had two purposes to answer, and but one matter to work upon. You wanted to persuade us that the Danish expedition had produced a fatal consequence to us; and you also wanted to persuade us, that leaving the whole of the continent with all its ports and arsenals, in the hands of Napoleon, would not be at all dangerous to us. To effect the former purpose, it was necessary to set a high value upon the aid we derived from continental connections; to effect the latter purpose, it was necessary to decry those connections, and to represent England as self-dependent for her safety. You wanted to blow both hot and cold, and, if you had (poor gentleman!) but one mouth, it was nature's fault, and not yours.

But, we are now coming to a passage, at the penning of which you must certainly have invoked the genius of the great Talleyrand, and at the conclusion of which you must have bridled up your head, with a self-

congratulatory smile, saying, "there, petti-"foggers, match that if you can." It has been thought, and said, by many persons, that the French aim at the destruction of our constitution, liberties, and religion; and, as the destruction of them would naturally be included in the conquest of England, the French do, in my opinion, aim at that destruction. By way of combatting this opinion, you ask: "At what period, since the "revolution in France, has the French go-"vernment *proposed* to us, that we should "relinquish, or divest ourselves of, our con-"stitution, liberties and religion?" To whom did you address this, Sir? Certainly you must have supposed, to the most base or the most stupid of mankind. You are a fit person, indeed, to complain of insults to the common sense and common feeling of the nation; you, who have the impudence coolly to desire us to believe, that the French do not wish to destroy us as an independent nation, *because* they never have made to us a formal proposition to give our consent to such destruction. Verily, if your verbal discourse be like your written, the rabble of Liverpool treated you with unaccountable forbearance. You proceed to tell us, that "neither in the negociations of 1801, 1803, "or 1806, do we find traces of any proposi-"tion on the part of France, which could "infringe, in the slightest degree, upon the "*independence*, the *interest*, or the *prospe-"rity*, of this country." You may know, though I do not, how to distinguish between national "interest" and "prosperity," or you may, from your intimacy with John Doe and Richard Roe, think, that tautology is a beauty in composition; but, as to the substance of what you say, it is this, that, from the beginning to the end, France has not, in any of the three negociations, *proposed any one thing*, to which we had any solid ground of objection; an assertion, which, from my soul, I believe, Arthur O'Connor himself would not, for his character's sake, venture to make in the face of the world. You appear to be aware of an exception that even your political friends (if you have any) might wish you to have made with respect to the propositions, made through Andreossy, relative to the press, and the speeches in parliament; but, say you, "even the com-"plaints made by the French ruler against "the *licentiousness* of the British press were "abandoned, and eventually formed no "part of the discussions;" though you had, before, taken infinite pains to inculcate a belief, that the present war arose *wholly* from the publications in England against Buonaparté; that "it was instigated by a few in-"terested and unprincipled individuals;" that "it is *demonstrated*, that the disagree-"ment arose from publications in this "country." But, here again, niggardly nature has refused you the two mouths. When you wanted to cause it to be believed, that England began the war without any reasonable cause, and that there existed, in reality, no grounds of hostility, and no grounds of alarm as to the designs of Buonaparté, then it was necessary for you to find out *the real cause of the war*, and that cause was, the offence which Buonaparté took at the publications in England; but *now*, when your object is to persuade us, that your great friend (I must call him so, however it may shock your modesty), has not the least desire to do any thing that can, "in the "slightest degree, infringe upon the inde-"pendence of England," you find it necessary to speak very lightly of the complaint about our "licentious press," and to tell us, that, before the war broke out, those complaints were abandoned, and, at last, "formed no part of the discussions:" in other words, that the publications from the press were *not* the cause of the war, and that what you have before asserted, upon that subject, was a wilful falshood.

Barefaced and disgusting as these contradictions are, however, they are quite equalled by some which are yet to be noticed. You tell us, that the cause of war now alledged is, that "if peace were once esta-"blished, it would enable France to *create a* "*marine*, by which she might overpower "the British navy and subjugate the coun-"try." These words you insert as a *quotation*, but *without reference*, for a reason best known to yourself. No, Sir; this also is false. It is not thus, that the objectors to peace express themselves; for this would be to declare for "*perpetual* war," a declaration, which, with your usual attention to truth, you have ascribed to us. We say, or, I do, at least, that, if we were now to make peace with Napoleon, leaving him in possession of all the ports and naval arsenals upon the continent, and without making any stipulation to prevent the creation of a marine, that he would, in a very few years of peace, create a navy sufficient to overpower us; and, that, therefore, we ought to keep on the war, till we can obtain the separating of some of the maritime states from him, or a stipulation such as I have mentioned; because, in the case of a peace, now made, without such stipulation, we could not dismantle a ship or disband a regiment; that the expences of peace would be equal to the expences of war, and the danger infi-

nitely greater; that he would obtain repose, and that we should receive an augmentation of inquietude; that he, never having any apprehensions of us, would have leisure to mature his maritime projects, while our navy must from the very nature of its constitution become, day after day, in a state less formidable than it now is. This is what I have, over and over again, stated; and, if you had taken this statement, you would have had *something to answer*. But, now, let us hear what you say in order to convince us of the absurdity of the alarm arising from the notion, that peace, now made, upon the terms proposed by France, will enable Napoleon to create a marine. You tell us, that France is, by nature, not a naval power; that, in the most prosperous days of her navy, she was unable to cope with the fleets of Holland; that those persons are almost insane, who seem to imagine, that, because Buonaparté has been so successful by land he must, if he turn his attention that way, be equally successful by sea; and that, therefore, we may safely make peace, leaving dreams of alarm to the unmanly creatures who entertain them. But, lest your powers of *soothing* should fail, you, a little further on, try the effect of threats, and tell us, that, if we will not make peace, then Buonaparté may, and, in all likelihood, will, beat us by sea. You say, that, in the commencement of the French revolution, France was not military; that the attacks made upon her made her military; that, if she had been left *quiet*, she would not have become formidable to her neighbours; that she was compelled, in her defence, to take a government purely military; that, "*in like manner*," France is not now a naval power (though she has been "*attacked*" by a navy for many years), and, if left in a state of *tranquillity* would not be at all likely to attempt it; but, "if *compelled* to assume "it, if *threatened* with perpetual war, if "*harrassed* from year to year by protracted "hostilities; if compelled to become naval "for her own *safety*; then it is impossible "to say that the same spirit which has been "manifested by land may not be excited by "sea, an event greatly to be dreaded, and "the more to be apprehended, as she is "now associated, in the *same cause*, with "almost every maritime state in Europe." Poor, injured, "harrassed" France, "compelled" to become naval for her own "*safety!*" Never was there any thing uttered so devoid of principle as this. I defy the Old Bailey to produce such an advocate. And so, sir, you wish to tame us as they do elephants; stroke us with one hand and cudgel us with the other? When it is your purpose to sooth us into peace, we are told that it is a mark of insanity to suppose that France can ever rival the naval power of England, but, when you take up the cudgel, we are warned to take care how we provoke her to become a naval power. While the former scheme is in your mind, you tell us, that France, even in the best days of her navy, was unable to cope with Holland, quite forgetting to tell us that Holland *now* makes part of France; but, when you come again to your cudgelling operations, you do not forget this circumstance, but remind us that almost every maritime state in Europe is now under the absolute controul of France, or, as you, with your accustomed candour, choose to express it, "*associated* with her "in the same cause." But, sir, as to your argument, there is a little deficiency in point of analogy, to which, in your next edition, it may not be amiss for you to attend. Give me leave to place it before you in as clear a light as I can. France (*you* say), at the beginning of her revolution, was not military (false in fact); the attack upon her made her not only military but a military conqueror, and that because "the nations of the continent became her instructors in military tactics." France (you say) is not now naval; but a perseverance in a naval war, on our part, will, or at least may, *as in the other case*, make her not only naval, but a naval conqueror. No, sir; and if you have deceived yourself by this sort of logic, your brain is of that kind which Swift describes as not capable of bearing many skummings. You quite overlook the want of similarity in the circumstances. It was (taking your fact for granted), at the *beginning* of her war that she was not military; but it is at the *end* of fifteen years of war that she is not naval, though the war has, all along, been naval as well as military, as the total destruction of her fleet, old as well as new, is, to her, at least, a convincing proof. For your argument to have been worth any thing, as applied to the purpose which you had in view, there should have been *no naval war* all this time; or, you should have been able to say, that France was destitute of a navy in 1792, and that now, in consequence of our "attack" upon her, she had drilled herself into a formidable naval power. "The nations of Europe," you tell us, "have been her *instructors* in military affairs," and you express your fear, that, unless we make peace, we shall, in like manner, "*become* her instructors in naval affairs." Become! Now, really, sir, I must charge you, in your capacity of pleader for France, as being very

ungrateful; for, have we not been endeavouring to instruct her these fifteen long years, in all sorts of naval affairs, in battles of all sizes, and in all parts of the world, not forgetting to give, as it were purely for her sake, here and there a lesson to her allies, even unto those nations, who "are "now *associated* with her in the same "cause" (say *good* cause in your next edition, to make the thing complete); and, if they have, not one of them, profited from our instructions, in all that time, what reason is there to suppose, that they will begin now to profit from them? This is your main argument; upon this argument you ring all the changes; and in this argument, which is one of experience, you are completely beaten, fifteen years of experience having proved, that, *in war*, France, though having for her principal object, the destruction of England constantly in view, and though having at her command almost all the naval force of the continent of Europe, has been daily sinking as a maritime state; and, yet you would fain make us believe, that the only way to prevent her from becoming formidable at sea is *to make peace* with her, and that, too, upon terms, which shall leave her in quiet possession of all the means which the continent affords for the creation of a navy. Your proposition, stripped of all its useless words, and connected with undeniable fact, is this: the only danger which we have to apprehend from the hostility of France, is, that she may create a naval force; she has now, and has had for some years, almost the whole of the naval means of the continent at her disposal; we have been at war with her for fifteen years, and she has been daily sinking in naval power; *therefore*, in order to prevent her from rising in naval power, let us make peace with her as soon as possible, and insist upon no stipulation that shall prevent her from making use of the absence of our naval force for the creating of a naval force of her own. This is, disguise it how you will, the advice which you give to your country; advice which no man would give, who was not the enemy of his country, or, at least, who, from want of real patriotism, had not suffered his spite against his party opponents to get the better of every higher consideration.

You admit, sir, for argument's sake, that France would, in case of peace, increase her navy so as to threaten the independence of England; and, under this admission, you ask: "What is our remedy against it? "The answer," you continue, "is ready "from the whole tribe of alarmists: PERPETUAL WAR. This is the *avowed* object "of all their exertions, the sole preservative "against their terrors. Continually haunted in imagination by the spectre, Buonaparté, they cannot sleep in peace, unless "the blood of their fellow subjects be daily "and hourly flowing in their defence, in "every part of the world." For malignant aspersions there is nothing like a philanthropist by trade; but, sir, while you were drawing such a hateful picture of the cowardice of others, you certainly forgot those symptoms of unfeigned fear, which you exhibited at Liverpool, where you retreated at the very sound of the voice of your opponents, crying, if we are to believe the published reports, like a stout Italian, when a little blackguard of a dozen years old has given a hoist to his board of brittle images; you must have forgotten this, or you would have shown some compassion for the cowardice of us, who are, at least, your countrymen. But, sir, where is it that you have to refer to what you have here given as the answer of those whom you (brave man!) term the alarmists? *Who* has ever *said*, that "perpetual war is the object of his exer-"tions, and the *sole* preservative" against the dangers which he apprehends? I believe, that no one has ever said it, in print or out of print. But, I will tell you what we say: we say, that a war to last until our grand children are fathers of families; that a war for a hundred years to come, would be preferable to the subjugation of our country by France; and, preferable, too, to a peace, which, in our opinion, would speedily lead to such subjugation. Whether the sort of peace which you recommend would have this effect, is a question which has before been discussed by me,* and which I shall not discuss again here; but, that you feel conscious of the badness of your cause is pretty evident from your having recourse to such flagrant misrepresentations as that which I have just noticed. Perhaps, however, it is in the way of induction that you have made this statement of our sentiments. We insist, that perpetual war is preferable to subjugation by France; we insist that perpetual war is preferable to such a peace as would speedily lead to subjugation; we say what sort of peace we should think preferable to war; you are, I suppose, of opinion, that we shall get no such peace as

* See Register, present volume, page 65, and subsequent articles upon the subject of *Peace*, where I have used arguments, which, as far as my knowledge reaches, no one has yet attempted to answer.

this latter; and, hence you conclude, that we are for perpetual war, which, in this way, you take us to have openly avowed, as the sole preventive for the evil which we dread. But, observe, you take it for granted (for argument's sake) that our apprehensions are well founded, as to the *means* that it would put into the hands of our enemy; and how do you console us? Why, by telling us, first, that we have not the power, by continuing the war, to prevent the operation of those means; but, next, that the "immense pre-"parations for subduing us are *not* the *vo-"luntary* act of our enemy, who has, *pro-"bably*, other objects in view; but are "*forced* upon him by the *persevering* hosti-"lity of this country, and the *declared* pur-"pose of waging against him perpetual war; "or, in other words, of contending with "him, till one of the two countries be de-"stroyed as a nation and subjugated to the "will of the other." It is useless to repeat the accusation of falshood, so often before proved upon you; it is useless to express one's contempt of your misrepresentations; but, it is still less useless to ask you where you have ever seen such a declaration on the part of England against France. You do, indeed, quote a passage from the author of *War in Disguise:* "He (Buonaparté) says "there is room enough in the world for "him and us. 'Tis false; there is not room "enough in it for his new despotism and "the liberties of England." Whereupon you, like a true pettifogger, ask: "How "did, then, the liberties of England exist "so long in the same world with the *ancient "government* of France? Or, why were "Mr. Pitt and his friends so anxious to es-"tablish that government?" What a miserable quibble! Is it not evident, that the author of *War in Disguise* was not talking about the *internal* despotism of Buonaparté? Is it not manifest that he was speaking of his *universal* despotism, and particularly of the effect of his power over the maritime states of the world, to induce England to set about counteracting the effect of which power was the avowed object of the pamphlet in question? A man who can be guilty of such glaring misconstruction; who can wilfully expose himself to the imputation of ignorance, rather than forego the advantage to be derived from falshood, is well worthy of being the advocate of the cause you have espoused; but, he might, methinks, have spared us his moral reflections and his references to holy writ. There is, indeed, one way, in which we may be said to *force* Buonaparté to make vast preparations for invading us, namely, in *refusing to put on his yoke quietly.* "It is the *second* "blow that makes the battle," say the Quakers; and, as towards the Emperor Napoleon, you, Sir, appear to be a perfect "Friend." The refusal of the Prince of Portugal to make a fraudulent seizure of English property, held under the sanction of the law, you term a "*persevering*, after re-"peated remonstrances, in the maintaining "of alliances supposed to be injurious to a "belligerent and successful power;" and our conduct you describe by the words "*persevering* hostility;" that is to say, that by our persevering in a refusal to submit to Napoleon's terms, we *force* him to make vast preparations for invading and conquering us. "Under *such* circumstances," you proceed, "there can be no doubt that every effort "will be made by him for the invasion of "these islands." And then you go on again with your threats. But, Sir, why do you not address yourself *to him?* Since you find us so "persevering;" so mulishly obstinate in our reluctance to put our heads into the yoke, why do you not ask him to think of some terms of peace that we shall look upon as safe? This is a way of putting an end to the war, that has not, it would seem, come athwart your mind; and yet, there appears to be nothing unnatural in the idea; unless, indeed, you regard it as the height of presumption in us to think of any terms not strictly conformable to the dictates of his promulgated will. In that case your conduct is consistent, whatever people may think of you as a legislator and a patriot.

Suspecting, apparently, that the infallibility of your own judgment may be doubted by some few persons, at least, you appeal for a presumptive proof of the inoffensiveness of the views of France, to the opinions of the several sets of ministers, under whom negociations have been carried on with her for the termination of war. You tell us, that Lord Sidmouth and his colleagues, in 1801; that the same ministry, in 1803; that Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, in 1806; perceived no such objections to a pacification as the fears of the alarmists have now discovered; and that even the present ministers, "have acknowledged, in the face of Eu-"rope, that there was no substantial cause "for hostility between France and this "country, either from apprehensions of "this, or of any other, nature; but, that "the war was continued on account of "Russia *only*, and that his majesty was con-"tending *for interests not his own.*" This falshood I have exposed once before; but, in this place, it is stated still more distinctly, and, therefore, shall again be pointed out

The words of the declaration were, that "the negociation was *broken off* upon "points, *immediately* affecting, not his ma-"jesty's own interests, but those of his im-"perial ally." Now, was this a declaration, in the face of Europe, that his majesty, in continuing the war, was "contending "for interests not his own?" And, that "there was *no substantial cause* for war be-"tween England and France, but that the "war was continued on account of Russia "*only?*" What an impudent misconstruction! What a scandalous attempt to mislead the uninformed! Besides, what was this famous negociation of 1806? To hear you, Sir, would not any one suppose, that it was a negociation, just upon the point of ending in a treaty of peace, when some demand of ours in favour of Russia came, unfortunately, and broke all off again? To hear you, who would not imagine that this was the case? But, the fact is, as the fact pretty generally is with respect to your representations, completely the reverse; for this promising negociation, instead of being upon the point of ripening into a treaty of peace, had scarcely begun to show blossom, when it was blasted by a dispute about the *basis*, that is to say, about the foundation upon which the negociators should *begin to talk about terms*. The negociation, in truth, never really began, it never existed; and we call the silly thing, which was going on in 1806, a *negociation*, only because we have no word whereby to characterize it. Yet you speak, all along, of the negociation as an affair of great importance; you speak of the parties as being *agreed as to terms*; and you express your approbation of those terms, as well you may, for they are the dear offspring of your own prolific brain. Such a way of representing transactions, may do very well for the Lives of Lorenzo de' Medici and Pope Leo the Tenth; but with regard to transactions of yesterday a little more fidelity is required. The several sets of ministers, to whose opinions you have appealed against "the alarmists," all bear witness against you. In 1801, Lord Sidmouth and his colleagues expressly declared, that they had made peace "by way of *experiment*," and accompanied this declaration with another, that a large peace establishment would be necessary, in order to keep us upon our guard against probable dangers; which declaration, as you well know, was complained of by Buonaparté. In 1803, the same ministers declared, that we were at war with Buonaparté, *because we could not live in peace with him*; and they repeatedly stated their suspicions of his hostile designs even during the short interval of peace. After breaking off the negociation of 1806, the late ministry solemnly declared, "that the "restoration of the general tranquillity was "retarded only by the *injustice and ambi-"tion of the enemy*." These are excellent authorities for you to appeal to in corroboration of your opinion, that the views of France are just and moderate; that, the manner in which the last negociation was put an end to is a proof, that there is now no rational object in continuing the war, and a ground whereon for the people to proceed in petitioning the king to hasten negociations for peace.

Thus, Sir, have I had the patience to go through the whole of your pamphlet; and, I must say, that so much misrepresentation, misconstruction and falshood, accompanied with so little truth and sound reasoning; so much assurance with so little candour; so much malice with so little wit; so much profession of morality and religion with so little of the practice of either, I never before met with in any one of the hundreds of political publications whereon it has fallen to my lot to remark. You appear to me not only to have laid aside, or set at nought, that conscience, of which you speak so feelingly in your preface, but also to have been so infatuated as to suppose that there was not, in the whole English nation, one single person capable of detecting your miserable attempts at deception. As to your partiality for France, which is too glaring to be denied, I do not impute it to a desire on your part to see that country conquer your own. You do not proceed that length in your wishes. That is a state of things, which, indeed, you do not at all contemplate. You have a liking for the rulers of France, partly because they are the enemies, not of your country, but of the politicians you hate in your country; and partly, I am afraid, because they are triumphant. You owe the French rulers a grudge and the French people too, for having, by their actions as well as their solemn declarations, so completely belied your opinions and predictions; but, you have not the courage to acknowledge your error, and you therefore still have an attachment to them, while you throw the blame upon the powers by whom they were, as you call it, attacked. Your excuse is, that they were compelled to adopt a simple military despotism in their own defence, forgetting, apparently, what is notorious to all the world, namely, that, it was not 'till after they were out of danger, nay, after they had brought their enemies to their feet, and trampled them under their feet, that they adopted a

simple military despotism. This you must know as well as the rest of mankind; you must be satisfied, that the French are, by nature, disqualified for the enjoyment of what we call freedom; that their minds are as much averse from entertaining the idea as oil is averse from mixing with water; that, in short, a Napoleon, or some such master, they not only must have, but will have from choice. All this you must now clearly perceive; you must, in your heart, despise the French for it; but, the worst of it is, take away the French as objects of your admiration and applause, and your soured temper leaves you no object at all, which is a state of existence too dreary for any man to endure. There is another feature in your pamphlet, which I dislike; and that is, that you never, by any accident, suggest a saving of the public money, though one would think that it must have occurred to you, as being likely to contribute towards the lightening of those burdens, of the weight of which you fear the fatal consequences. The vile jobbing of the ministers; their greediness; their uniform propensity to screen peculators; their waste of the public money, in all manner of ways; none of this do you blame. You hate them only as bitter enemies of the French, and, in that light only it is that I view them with approbation. The late ministers were full as bad as the present, as to the management of the public money; and, they were, besides, very cold indeed in their feelings for the honour of the country. These present ministers have done more for the maintenance of that honour than has been done before, since the year 1792; and for this reason I prefer them. You would prefer them too, if you were not actuated by feelings of revenge, joined to your partiality for France; and, at any rate, if they have nothing more formidable than your pen to resist, they are secure in their places for life; for, the effect of every word, which you utter against them, is totally destroyed by your evident partiality towards your country's enemies. You hate your dog for devouring your eatables, but when you perceive that others hate your dog *because* he keeps the thieves from breaking into your house, you not only keep him, but your resentment against him is a good deal softened by the discovery; and do you not think that the nation will be actuated by similar motives?

I am, Sir, yours, &c. &c.

Botley, WM. COBBETT.
March 1, 1808.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

"PERISH COMMERCE."——Under this head I must place the little which I think it necessary to say, at present, upon the subject of Mr. ARTHUR YOUNG's letters, the second of which will be found in this sheet. The statement in this second letter, respecting the consequences of a total stop to the *importation of corn*, is, at the first glance, truly alarming, so that I, who am not very apt to be scared by battalions of figures, have really started back at the array of Mr. Young. Having taken time to rally, however, I find that my alarm was groundless; and, as the matter is of great public importance, I cannot let it pass without some few observations respecting it.—I had said, upon a former occasion, that, compared with the annual consumption of the nation, the importation of food was a mere trifle; and that I believed, that, in no one year, did the importation amount to more than sufficient to feed the people for *one week*. This Mr. Young says he was astonished at; and he has now shewn, that the average annual importation of corn, for 26 years last past, has amounted to nearly, or perhaps quite, two millions of pounds sterling. Now, the population of Great Britain is 11 millions, and, if we allow the food of each individual, taking one with the other, to cost about 4s. a week, one week's food amounts to the two millions of pounds; so that, if this rate of subsistence be admitted, I was not much out in my reckoning, and that the average consumption of individuals surpasses four shillings a week there can, I think, be very little doubt. It will not do to tell me, that it is only *corn* that we are here speaking of, and that individuals do not consume 4s. worth of corn weekly; for, though this fact be correct, I answer, that, if we have a plenty of every thing else but corn, we can do with less of that; and that, the only way of estimating is, to speak of *food* altogether.——I wish Mr. Young had informed us what quantity of provisions of various kinds is annually *exported* from Great Britain and Ireland; for, I am inclined to think, that the amount of it would surpass that of the imports. The shops in America, strange as it may seem, were tolerably well supplied with *English cheese*, which, of course, would remain at home, if we ceased to receive American corn. Mr. Young does, however, say that the supplies of corn from America are not worth speaking of; and I was glad to hear him say so, because, as the public will have perceived, the American clan have been endeavouring to frighten us with the spectre of *famine*, to arise out of the cutting off of these "abundant supplies."——Great praise is due to Mr. Young for his researches, for

his accuracy in detail, and for the ability with which he discusses all the subjects of which he treats; but, I do think, that he leaves the arguments of Mr. Spence wholly unanswered, it being impossible that any combination of facts can overset a principle, supported by reasons, which cannot be shown to be erroneous. Besides, what has Mr. Young's experience proved? Only this, that, at a particular period, when manufactures were languishing *wheat was cheap* and agriculture upon the decline, as indeed, it must necessarily be. I see no great evil in this, being anxious only, that the point may be settled, that England can exist great and free, independent of *commerce*, by which, observe, I always mean, trade with *foreign* nations.——There is one other topic, touched upon by Mr. Young, which I wish to advert to for a moment: I mean, his proposed *General Enclosure bill.* That such a bill would be like the bed of Procrustes; that it would be an outrageous invasion of private property; that it would fall upon title deeds and records with teeth as unsparing as those of a paper-mill; that it would give rise to confusion and litigation without end, must, I think, be evident to every man at all conversant in the divers tenures and claims appertaining to the unenclosed lands of this kingdom. But, what good would it produce? Would it cause more corn to be raised? If it would, it would be a calamity; for corn is now *too cheap*; at least, so have said the parliament, in their acts for exportation. Would it cause more persons to be born and raised up? Why, then, increase of consumption would go hand in hand with increase of production; and no increase of abundance would take place. But, my opinion is, that it would cause no increase at all in the quantity of food raised; and this opinion I shall retain, until I see *all the lands now enclosed* producing *every year*, a crop more than sufficient to pay all the expences of rent, taxes, and tillage. When I see such an accession of hands as to have brought out manure, and to have worked all the land, now enclosed, into this state; then I shall say, "enclose more land, for we cannot "make this more productive;" but, while I see one third part of the enclosed land producing annually nothing at all, or, at most, not half enough to pay the expences of rent, taxes, and tillage, I shall continue to think, that a *General Enclosure* bill would be a wondrous monument of national folly.

ORDERS IN COUNCIL.——The bill giving effect to the rules laid down in these Orders, gave rise to a discussion, in the House of Commons, on the 24th of February. The bill establishes imposts and prohibitions with respect to goods, going from England to the Continent, and, as was observed in my last, the regulations adopted in the Orders will necessarily compel most of the goods, which the Continent receives from abroad, to pass through our Custom-house. Amongst the articles enumerated in the bill was *Jesuit's Bark*, a well known medicinal drug. Mr. Whitbread caught hold of this as a fine topic of declamation, moved for leaving out the article, and insisted that this was "an *inhuman* mode of warfare;" just as if *we* had begun it. The object of this bill, and of all the regulations in question, is to retaliate upon the Emperor of France for his decree, declaring England in a state of blockade; making it criminal in any nation to hold any sort of commercial communication with us, and providing a punishment for such crime; placing us under an interdict; depriving us of aid and comfort to be derived from foreign connection and intercourse. What do we? We retaliate, but with less rigour; for, upon certain conditions, we allow a communication with the Continent. He makes no exceptions in favour of *our sick*. No exceptions at all; and why should we? Mr. Whitbread's logic is this: "if you "prevent the removal of disease, you must, "on the same principle, wish its increase; "and this principle will lead to the promo"tion of poisoning and assassination;" the conclusion he evidently aimed at being, that those who approve of this bill, would promote assassination, if they had the opportunity. No, Sir; for though I approve of this bill, I would not promote assassination any more than you would; though I approve of the bill, I do not wish to prevent the removal of disease, any more than you wish to prevent the removal of thirst by charging sixpence a pot for your porter, when you see many poor wretches who cannot possibly get it at that price. You cannot, I dare say, sell your porter cheaper without danger to your fortune; nor can we suffer the bark to go to France without danger to our fortune as a nation, because the same argument which will apply to the bark will apply to every other article, the very object of the bill being to produce *suffering* and *distress* amongst those who are leagued together, whether willingly, or not, for our destruction. You, Sir, like Mr. Roscoe, never seem to recollect, that the enemy has it, at all times, in his power to put an end to this "inhuman mode of warfare," and that, too, by the simplest of all means, namely, that of *ceasing to carry it on himself.* "Oh,

"yes; a fine story, indeed, to expect *him* "to recede!" Why, really, Sir, if we do suffer ourselves to yield to insolent pretentions like this, we are unworthy of being independent; we not only must perish as a nation, but we *ought* so to perish.——You are alarmed, lest Napoleon's agents should go to his hospitals and say: "Behold, here "is an English act of parliament, which "prevents you from obtaining a remedy for "your complaints." If such were to be the conduct of his agents, the effect, it appears to me, would be this: the sick soldiers would say: "Aye! is it so, indeed? Why, "then, that England is a great power yet. "The acts of that parliament are mighty "things. England is not humbled, nor is "it so very easy to conquer her. What! "can that parliament, then, shut up all the "channels of the boundless ocean? Why, "then, France, after all our fighting and "conquering, is little better than a besieged "town." This is what they would naturally say upon hearing only one side of the story; but, if they were to hear the other; if they were told, that this was, on our part, merely an act of retaliation, and that they might have Jesuit's Bark the moment their commander chose to revoke his interdict against us, their execration would fall upon his head and not upon ours.——Mr. Wilberforce was, upon this occasion, with the Jesuit's Bark party. He, acute gentleman, discovered a distinction between this case, and the case of a besieged town. He saw, that, in the latter case, a prohibition of this sort might induce a general to capitulate; but, that there was not the least probability, that the prohibition proposed would put an end to the present contest with France. Putting an end to the contest is not immediately contemplated; what is in contemplation is, to make the Continent rue the effects of abetting a man, who has sworn our destruction, and who has placed us under an interdict. Now, the people of the Continent, in France as well as out of it, have yet the power of giving vent and effect to their feelings, or they have not; if they have, the sufferings which our prohibitions produce amongst them must lead to openly expressed hatred against him who is the cause of those prohibitions; and, if they have not, if the people of the Continent are so completely subjected to the will of Napoleon, that no sufferings can possibly move their passions; why, then, how is it possible that any regulations of ours can work a change in their minds to our disadvantage? But, Mr. Wilberforce thinks it is certain, that Napoleon will have the bark, some how or other; and, that all which we shall gain will be an addition of hatred from the people of France. As to an *addition* of hatred, I am not afraid of that. I believe they neither love nor hate us, any more than one can be said to love or hate an ox or a fat hog. They would willingly conquer us and pillage us, if they could, for which it would be foolish in us to be angry with them, seeing, that, if the occasion suited, we should be very likely to conquer and pillage them. At this present time all we aim at is *defence*; one way of defending ourselves is to weaken our enemy, and one way of weakening him is to make him get jesuits bark at the expence of a guinea an ounce instead of a shilling an ounce.——Mr. Whitbread reminded us, that, in case of a scarcity here, the enemy *might* prevent us from receiving corn from the continent, by way of retaliation; and so starve us. But, he has *already* cut off our communication with the corn countries of the continent; and, does Mr. Whitbread suppose, that he would have opened the communication last month, if we had had a short harvest? the idea is perfectly ridiculous. —— The same argument that has been urged against the prohibition of jesuit's bark will apply to all articles whatever; for they all, in a greater or less degree, either directly or indirectly, are conducive to the convenience, and necessary to the wants of the people of the continent. By the cutting off of the supply of cotton some persons, at least, will greatly suffer; all suffering is not upon a sick bed; but all suffering leads to a sick bed; if you, Mr. Whitbread will say, prevent people from obtaining that which is necessary to keep them from suffering, you must, on the same principle, wish their sufferings to increase; and, as all sufferings lead to death, at a faster or slower pace, this principle will lead to the promotion of poisoning and assassination. —— The truth is, that there was no foundation whatever for the objection, which was manifestly brought forward for the purpose of debate. To the whole of the measure, indeed, there *might* be some solid objections, but I have observed none such. The measure is a most important one. It is indeed, though not in word, a practical assertion of *the sovereignty of the sea.* As such it is looked upon by other nations; and the only fault of it is, that it was not adopted under that *name*, and that the duties now to be imposed were not denominated a *tribute.* This measure gives quite a new aspect to the war; it places us upon a new footing, and gives us a new character. We are not now going sneaking about like a set of hucksters

and smugglers, wheedling this and that neutral to be our friends and to deal with us. We say (and I am only sorry that we do not say it flatly and plainly), you shall none of you have any communication with one another, without paying tribute to us. There are some persons who call this "*piracy*," though I wish they would consider a little their piracy upon the public purse. The late attorney general (a very worthy man, I believe) called upon his brethren of the law to say, whether they ever read of the like being done before. They might have called upon him to say, whether he ever read of all the ports and naval arsenals of the continent being in the hands of one man before; and when he ever before heard of England's being declared to be in a state of blockade. What would our ancestors, at any period of our history, have said, if any power had had the assurance to decree their country in a state of blockade? Does Mr. Whitbread think, that they would have stood balancing about *commercial interests?* They would not have hesitated a single moment to declare every country their enemy who should refuse to resist such an intolerable pretension.

LORD LAKE.——On Tuesday, the first instant, a debate took place, in the House of Commons, upon a grant proposed, by a message from the King, to be made to the successor and family of Lord Lake, and upon another grant proposed to be made for the purpose of erecting a *monument to his memory*. It was curious to see how both INS and OUTS pressed forward, as it were in rivalship, in support of this proposition. Thus they always do, when the public money is to be bestowed upon any of themselves. Mr. Whitbread, Lord Folkestone, and Sir Francis Burdett were the only persons who *spoke* against it; and, upon the division, which Sir Francis Burdett called for and insisted upon, there appeared but 25 to vote against the pecuniary grant out of 226. The pecuniary grant was of £2,000, with a retrospect; making an additional sum of 9,000l to be paid down immediately. Never was there a more flagrant instance of the waste of public money; and this, too, at a time, when we are told, that the sacrifice of our last shilling is necessary. This Lord Lake, who was a conqueror of tawneys; who, as far as I have heard, never was engaged against any thing worthy of the name of an army, and who enjoyed, while in India, an enormous salary, receives a peerage, comes home, dies of a cold, and, then, we are called upon to make a noble provision for his family. Mr. Whitbread went only half way. He objected to the 9,000l. and the monument; but, on account of the poverty of Lord Lake's family, assented to the pension of 2,000l., though that was by far the most objectionable part of the proposition, it being, in fact, a mortgage upon the taxes of the nation to the amount of 100,000l. principal. I will here subjoin what was said by Sir Francis Burdett upon the subject, exactly as I find it reported in the ORACLE newspaper, reserving some further remarks for another opportunity.——"I feel it my duty to enter my "protest against this motion, as well as "against every thing of this sort in the "present condition of things; and I do it "on three grounds — one is that of a public nature, and the others as particularly "applying to this case. Perfectly agreeing "in all that I have heard as to the particular "case of my lord Lake, it is not necessary "for me, and certainly not a pleasant task, "to dilate at all on that subject. But services, whenever they come before the house "of commons, and a demand of remuneration is made for them from the public, "ought always to be of that kind and description that no man can feel any inclination to ask what these services were. "They ought to be of that brilliant kind, "that no question could be asked concerning them, because they are known "throughout the world; or else, in my "humble opinion, they ought not to be "brought forward before this house as the "ground of remuneration from the public. "But, in the present situation of this country, and from the burthens set upon the "people, it is necessary there should be "more than what may be called extraordinary services to justify such a demand as "this on the purse of the people. Therefore, on that ground, I shall feel it my "duty to object to the vote now proposed. "But, on general and constitutional ground, "I object to it still more strongly; because "I do think that his majesty has ample "means and resources, without coming to "this house, to reward all the merit that "this and all the countries in the world ever "produced; much more, I fear, than can "be produced by this country at present; "and ample, I am certain, for the reward "of all the merit which is now before us. "What have been the arguments used on "all occasions, when an application is made "for any pension by which an addition is "made to the burthens of the country, "which the king possesses the means of defraying? What is it but a partial ground "—a pretence that there are no means in "the hands of the crown to reward merito-

rious services? Should these means of reward be possessed by the crown, why should they be wasted in the reward of services which do not meet the light, and probably, if known in this house, would meet the reprobation of every member? It is on this ground that I shall take the sense of the house on this question. With respect to the merits of lord Lake, my opinion is, that the merits of the people of England, in suffering such privations as they have borne, are much greater than those of any individual, either now in existence, or who has lived since the commencement of our present difficulties. I therefore shall not only give my negative to the proposition now before us, but think it my duty to divide the house upon it.

"The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he had not a lower opinion of the merit of the people of England than the worthy baronet; but did not know how they could be rewarded with pensions. As to the power of the crown to reward merit, he wished to know whether the worthy baronet was aware of the extent of the Civil List, with which the Crown had power to reward merit, which was only to the amount of 1,200l. a year, which in effect amounted to no more than 800l., and this the king could only grant for his own life.

"Mr. *Wm. Smith* explained his sense of the meaning of sir F. Burdett in the reward he expected to be given to the people of England for their merit, which was that of the vigilance of their representatives in taking care of their interests.

"Sir *F. Burdett*.—"Before the committee come to a vote, I think it fit to say a few words more; not in explanation of what I before said; for that has been done most completely by the hon. gent. below me (Mr. Wm. Smith): but to assign reasons why I am unable to accede to the wishes of those who have recommended to me not to divide the house. The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not intentionally, misrepresented what I said about rewarding the people of England for the manner in which they have submitted to privations, and their various sufferings. He chose to state the Pension List, as if the crown had no other means of rewarding merit, but out of the Civil List. I believe that makes but a very small part of the means possessed by the crown to reward merit—and here I might appeal to the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself; *for I think he can give me some specific information, without going out of his own family that the crown does possess ample means of rewarding extraordinary merit, without having recourse to the Civil List.* I should be very happy to agree in voting for this reward supposing the reward to have been deserved, and there were no other means of providing it than that of adding to the burthens of the people of England. But if ministers had come down to this house, and told us that the patronage of the reversions of sinecure places were, henceforward, to be abolished for ever; I should certainly not be niggardly, as it has been called, even in my mode of rewarding the memory of deserving men for their services to the public; and that too, in the present exhausted state of the pocket of the people; but, before I can consent to doing that, I must be assured that sinecures, and the reversion of sinecures, are to be put an end to. I must say as ministers have forced me to it, that *my lord Lake's character is nothing like that of my lord Nelson's*, and yet ministers are proposing to my lord Lake a monument, as they did to the memory of lord Nelson. I say that the memory of lord Lake has not the same call upon the gratitude of his country as that of my lord Nelson. I do not think that true merit will ever go unrewarded by the people of England; and I am satisfied that if a tenth part of the patronage of ministers was bestowed only on objects truly worthy of remuneration, every military and naval man in this country, deserving of encouragement, would be fully satisfied, without any addition to the burthens of the people." Here he took a short view of the character of Lord Lake in India, and observed *that his successes there, were not extraordinary, for every British officer achieved victories in India.* But, laying aside all these considerations, he went upon the broad constitutional ground, that unless ministers gave the house an assurance that all sinecures and reversions in places, were to be abolished, he must persist in taking the sense of the house. "Or rather," said he, "I will *divide* the house upon this subject," for, "taking the sense of the house," is a common expression, when the sense of it is too plain already. Having stated these principles in my own justification, for persevering in my intention to divide the house, I shall not detain you any longer, but merely to say that I have

" not heard a word which has altered my " original opinion on this subject."—The Civil List! Poor civil list affords, according to Mr. Perceval's account, only £800 a year for the king to give away, in the reward of merit. But, this civil list is a thing made of stretching materials. It can be extended this way and that way. In 1801 or 1802 (See account of 1802) there was *lent* out of this civil list, upwards of £100,000 to the king's sons; and so the civil list fell into *arrear*; and then the minister, Addington, came with a bill to parliament for the purpose of making the people pay off the arrear; that is to say, pay, amongst other things, the £100,000 which, without the consent of parliament, had been lent to the king's sons, and that, too, observe, notwithstanding the *Droits of Admiralty*!—More of this hereafter.

Botley, 4th March, 1808.

AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES, AND COMMERCE.

SIR,——It gave me very great concern to perceive by your last Journal, that the letter in which I requested you to cancel the account of corn imported in 1800, did not come to your hands in time; as I stated in it that the account was greatly erroneous. A severe disorder in my eyes has obliged me to depend on an amanuensis, which has occasioned errors I much lament: the following was the importation of that year.

Corn imported in 1806.

Species.	Quantity.		At per Quarter.		Value.
	Q.	B.	s.	d.	£.
Barley ..	5,385	5	38	6	10,367
Beans ..	3,406	3	43	9	7,451
Oats....	510,242	3	25	8	654,811
Pease ...	1,514	4	43	6	3,294
Rye	829	5	47	4	1,963
Wheat..	318,917	–	79	0	1,259,722
Total.. *	840,295	4			1,937,608

Now, Sir, as I should be sorry to trouble you merely with an erratum, permit me, on this account to observe, that it furnishes a proof of a degree of precariousness in the national resources, that ought to make a deep impression on the minds of those in whose hands the safety of the kingdom is placed. To find that our consumption of wheat in a year of moderate plenty, exceeds the produce by more than a million sterling, accompanied as it is by a population admitted on all hands to be increasing, must surely be considered as a just cause of apprehension. Were the countries which have usually supplied us, in a state of independence and security, the prospect would be far from pleasing; but when we cast an anxious eye to the ports of the Baltic, the view becomes dreary indeed. To expect our bread from America, would be to look for it from a country whence it never came, except in quantities perfectly insignificant when compared with the magnitude of our demand. If the price of wheat was at present high, there are many who would deprecate all consideration of the subject; but the price is now so moderate as to prevent the smallest alarm: no trifling motive for such discussions as may tend to throw a light on the subject; and ought to induce the legislature of the kingdom to give a direct and steady attention to it. Who can contemplate the consequence of a short crop, a mildew, or a wet harvest, without terror? Manufactures and commerce inactive; and ill disposed minds gathering discontents into petitions for peace! It is easy to imagine such a combination, but not so easy to measure the result. I know not any view that can be taken of the subject, over which there is not suspended a dark cloud which sheds a gloom not easily dispersed: if there is any circumstance that tends peculiarly to thicken it, the present state of our extensive wastes is well calculated to do it.—Upon this subject Mr. Spence has several very just observations, but he offers one remark in which I cannot agree with him: and, as it is upon an important point, I must crave your further indulgence for a moment.—" It is calculated, that in this kingdom there are twenty two millions of acres of waste land; and, it is frequently asked, by the followers of the economistes, as well as by those who are of a very different opinion on matters of political economy; why this waste land is not brought into cultivation, and why such a source of riches as this, is neglected? For this very good reason—that the greater part of this land, with the present demand for, and the present prices of the produce that could be raised from it, would not pay for cultivation. Every person who has had occasion to let land, knows, that there are many more farmers wanting farms, than there are farms to supply them; and this being the case, it follows, iddisputably, that if the

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* Flour reduced to quarters at 3 cwt. per quarter.—There is an error also in the sum total of the import of wheat for 26 years, but at the average, or 413,000 qrs. is nearly the truth, I will not trouble you with the correction.

waste lands in the kingdom could be profitably cultivated, it would speedily be occupied by those farmers who so eagerly seek employment for their capital." P. 28.—It is I conceive, a great mistake, to suppose that these lands remain uncultivated for want of a demand of the uncultivated produce; seeing that the prices of all the returns of grass lands are adequate to their production; with a regular import of corn to an immense amount: the reason for the scandalous state in which they are left is exceedingly different: they are under rights of commons, and cannot be touched without distinct acts of parliament to permit the plough to produce grass and corn, instead of gorse and ling. Rather than give this permission by a general act of enclosure, parliament is content that a large portion of the people should be fed by foreign, rather than by British corn; and is content to remain, at the present moment, a quiet spectator of the waste state of these lands, at a period when a short crop, or a week's mildew, would make an enormous import necessary. Ministers best know where it is to be had; to me it seems just as probable to procure it from the moon as from Prussia or Poland. Were such a moment to arrive, we should see the two houses called together; committees appointed; examinations, proceedings, proclamations issued; harangues pronounced; substitutes recommended; the volunteers in activity; government alarmed; and Buonaparté delighted. And what would be the effect of all this? Experience has told us: the general alarm would raise the price rapidly, and thus lessening the sumption, what might have proved a dreadful famine, converted into no more than a severe scarcity; but with the foreign supply cut off we might expect these evils to attend a much smaller deficiency than produced the same evils on a former occasion. I leave to others fully to appreciate debates on Copenhagen, and the other *very important objects* occupying that attention which might be given to measures for establishing the security and prosperity of the kingdom on the solid foundation of our domestic resources. But to return; The demand for farms is at present very general, a proof that capital is not wanting; and wherever an act of enclosure appropriates a tract of waste land, neither hands nor money are wanting for its culture, plantation, or other improvement, according to the soil and other circumstances of the case. Enfield Chase is not a proof to the contrary; and were other royal forests enclosed on the same principles, the measure would be equally nugatory. If a general enclosure bill was to pass, many millions of acres at present unproductive, would be brought into cultivation; the necessity of importing corn would be removed; and those farmers alluded to by Mr. Spence who possess capital, but want employment, would, by their vigorous exertions, soon convince that gentleman that the only obstacle in their way is the negative at present put on the power of enclosing.——I have the honour to be, Sir, &c.——ARTHUR YOUNG.—*Feb.* 24, 1808.

CURATES' SUSPENSION BILL.

SIR,——The account published by you, in your last week's Register is so extremely incorrect, that I am induced to send you a statement, which will, I believe, completely refute the aspersions, which have been most unwarrantably thrown on the conduct of Lord Oxford, in a transaction, which you assert to be unparalleled. By the 1st of Geo. I. augmented curacies were subject to the same rules of avoidance as other benefices, and the clause inserted in the act of 1796, only declared that to be law, which, in fact, was law before.—The living of Brampton Brian was, in 1800, given by Lord Oxford to his brother-in-law Mr. James Scott. In 1805 the perpetual curacy of Titley became vacant. To this curacy Lord Oxford's ancestors had been great benefactors—to the amount of near £1200; and, in consequence, the right of nomination had always been exercised by them. On this occasion, however, the Warden and College of Winchester disputed the right, and it appeared that they were legally entitled to it, because nothing but an act of parliament, could alienate their church preferment: but had the curacy been in Lord Oxford's nomination, he would have given it to Mr. Bissel, and not to Mr. Scott. Though a contrary statement was made, in the House of Commons, by Mr. Whitbread, yet he was positively contradicted on this point, by another honourable member. It is to be observed, that at the time of Mr. Scott's nomination to the perpetual curacy of Titley, he was a Fellow of New College Oxford, of which College the Warden and all the Fellows of Winchester, must necessarily have been previously Fellows.—It is impossible to construe Lord Oxford's having become the renter of *part* of the tythes in the parish of Titley, into a consent and approbation, on his part, of Mr. Scott's nomination to the curacy, because Lord Oxford's principal residence is in the parish, and he only rented the tythes of the land, in his own occupation. I leave it to you to judge, whether the compounding for small tythes, instead of paying them in kind

is not, what every man would do, whether the incumbent had obtained his preferment, with or without his consent.—Lord Oxford availed himself of his right to present to Brampton Brian, as soon as ever he was informed that the living was voidable. He thought himself fully justified in so doing, as disputes of a very unpleasant nature had arisen between him and Mr. Scott, in consequence of which he was anxious to remove Mr. Scott, from the neighbourhood of Brampton Brian, where his lordship has another mansion, at which he frequently resides, and the garden of which is immediately adjoining to the Parsonage House.—Lord Oxford's character and conduct are too well known, in his own county and neighbourhood, to admit of a suspicion that he would act either unjustly or oppressively towards any individual, especially towards one, with whom he was so nearly connected.—With regard to the respective values of Brampton Brian and Titley, the latter has hitherto been as profitable as the former; and had the rectory of Brampton Brian been "TEN TIMES" or even "SEVEN TIMES" the value of the curacy, which is upwards of £200 a year, how came Mr. Scott to hold this valuable rectory together with his fellowship of New College, for more than four years, when, by the statutes of that College, no Fellow can hold preferment of a greater annual value than £120?——Your assertion, that Mr. Scott's curate at Brampton Brian refused to accept the living is totally destitute of foundation.—I rely upon your candour, either to insert this letter, or to contradict what was erroneous in your original statement.——I am, Sir, yours, &c—A.B. C.—*Feb.* 25, 1808.

ARMY.

SIR,——Whenever our army becomes the subject of conversation, either in or out of parliament, I always hear a great fuss made about their high state of discipline. Yet, neither members, field marshalls, generals, or inspecting field officers, seem to know wherein real discipline consists. One thinks it lies in the cut of a soldier's hair, and in the particular length of his queue; another on his being able to stand for hours on one leg like the geese on Botley common. Sir James Cradock hates the mustache; Lord Paget and their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales, and Duke of Cumberland, are great friends to its growth. A few years ago a dragoon was thought to be defenceless without his helmet, now he is clad in furs and tippets like a man-milliner, with a great muff upon his head. Among the heavy dragoons cocked hats are abolished, among the light they are just coming into vogue. Even a man may become a capital good soldier by introducing some barbarous accent into the plainest and simplest English words of command. Every thing for sound and shew.—But whence comes it, Mr. Cobbett, that all this low imitation and frivolity, originate entirely in the higher ranks of the army, and that there is such a total dearth of genius and talent among that class of men who bear the name of Generals? But this would only be a temporary grievance: the evil, Mr. Cobbett, has a much deeper root. It proceeds from this, that no man of superior talent, (and very few of those who possess common sense), will remain in the army, if their rank runs so high as to remove them from the command of a battalion. The command of a battalion is an object of ambition, which almost every one who aspires to it can attain, and it is a situation also, in which a man may chance to distinguish himself. But the officer who gets a step beyond that, unless he possesses great family connexions, or parliamentary interest, sees nothing before him but "a dull, dreary, unvaried, vista of exclusion and despair." Despair drives the man of genius from the field, and the prudent man will rather turn his commission into cash, than be honoured with the appellation of General, while he starves during the rest of his life on a lieut. colonel's pay. Hence it comes, that in the last ten years, 4-5ths of our best officers have retired from the service before they attained the rank of generals. It is the radical defect of our English army, and if you or any man in England, will point out a cure, you will render a greater service to your country than if you had added thousands to its numerical force.——I am, Sir, yours, &c.——V.

COLD BATH FIELDS PRISON.

Copy of the Petition, presented to the House of Commons, Feb. 19, 1808.

To the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of the Honourable House of Commons, of Great Britain and Ireland, in the United Parliament assembled:——The Petition of Alexander Stephens, of the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, and Park House, in the County of Middlesex, Esquire, Humbly sheweth, That certain persons lately serving the office of grand jurymen for the county of Middlesex, to the number of about nine, having visited the House of Correction for the said county, commonly called the Cold Bath Fields Prison, on Tuesday, Nov. 3, in the year of our Lord 1807, between the hours of 11 and 12 in the forenoon:—— They there discovered, that all the loaves

found by them (each of which ought to contain 16 ounces, and to be distributed daily, at 10 o'clock in the morning) were greatly deficient in point of quantity, as will be seen from the annexed statement on the part of one of the magistrates of the city of London. ——That the prison weight demanded and used upon the present occasion, for trying the loaves in rotation, proved also deficient, as was fully demonstrated in both instances on the same day, when compared with the standard at Guildhall, in the presence, first, of Sir W. Leighton, Knight, then Lord Mayor; and afterwards of Richard Phillips, Esq. then and still one of the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, as well as of four of the late grand jury; and, moreover, that the scales of the said prison were false and fraudulent:

Copy of a Letter from Mr. Sheriff Phillips to William Mainwaring, Esq. Chairman of the Quarter Sessions, &c.

"Sir;——I consider it a duty which I owe the public to inform you, as chairman of the quarter sessions, and, I believe, one of the committee for conducting the business of the prison, that I was present when an appeal was lately made by the grand jury of the county to the standard weights in Guildhall; that I witnessed the examination of the pound weight for weighing meat and other provisions in the House of Correction, Cold Bath Fields, when it was found to be seven-eighths of an ounce too light; and that on weighing some loaves which were found in the same prison, by the grand jury, they appeared also to be considerably too light, one or two of them being from an ounce and a half to two ounces under weight. I should compromise the feelings which I bear towards the respectable magistracy of the county of Middlesex, if I were to omit to make this formal communication.——I have the honour to be, &c.—R. Phillips, Sheriff;—Bridge street, Nov. 13, 1807."

Your petitioner, together with other gentlemen, late members of the grand jury, also discovered: that several of the liege subjects of this realm were committed to close custody in cells destitute of fire, 8 feet 3 inches long, by 6 feet 3 inches wide, two of them in irons, although sick; some, if not all, of these were innocent in point of fact, as all were then innocent in point of law, being detained under the pretext of re examination, and consequently uncondemned by the legal judgment of their peers, or even the accusatory verdict of a grand jury. Of this number were a mother, a daughter, and a son, of creditable appearance; the two former in one cell, so situated as to be exposed to a continual current of external air, without the possibility of obtaining, even during the severest frost, an artificial warmth by means of fuel, while the convicts below enjoyed all the comforts of an open roomy ward, with occasional access to fire.—— That in one of these lonely cells was closely confined a foreigner of some rank, the Chevalier de Blin, who, as we were told, by one of the jailors, while so immured, had been deprived of his reason, and who presented to your petitioner, after communicating with him for some time in the French language through the key-hole, and demanding entrance, a memorial on his knees.—— That in this place, originally destined for the improvement of the morals of petty offenders, a female prisoner, as we have learned, has been lately debauched by the son of the chief jailor, or governor, who then held an office of trust in the prison, and has since had a child, now, or at least lately, burdensome to the parish of Kensington, in the county of Middlesex——That four debtors were shut up in this House of Correction, the only communication between whom and the world, appears to take place occasionally, by means of two iron gates, at upwards of six feet distance from each other, with a jailor walking in at intervals, so as to preclude complaint; and that from the examination of a debtor, and also, by a letter from him, both in the possession of your Petitioner, it appears that he was shut up with persons guilty of robbery, and unnatural crimes——And, lastly, that six innocent persons, the bills against whom had been thrown out by the Grand Jury, were dragged from Cold Bath-fields prison to Hicks's-hall, in open day, at the close of the session, first manacled, and then fastened together by a rope, to be discharged by proclamation.——Your petitioner, therefore, conceiving that such gross instances of fraud, coupled with such an open violation of the laws, and even of the express orders of session, are calculated to bring his Majesty's government into contempt, and cast an unmerited odium on our most excellent constitution; thinking also, that if such malpractices were detected in a casual and slight survey, of less than two hours duration, far greater abuses are likely to be brought to light, by the intervention of the grand inquest of the nation, most humbly and earnestly solicits this Honourable House to take the premises into consideration, and by a public and open examination at its bar, or any other mode, afford such relief as may seem meet.

A. Stephens.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

France.——*Report of the Minister of Foreign Affairs relative to Portugal. Made in Oct.* 1807, *and published Jan.* 24, 1808. *(Concluded from p.* 352.*)*

It had neither protected the French nor their commorce; the persons and trade of their enemies have continued free and favoured. Portugal promised to join the cause of the continent, even to declare war against England; but she wished to make it, if I may use the expression, in concert with her, to furnish her, under the appearance of hostility, with the means of continuing her trade with Portugal, and through Portugal with the rest of Europe; a kind of war equialent to a perfidious neutrality. Succours were demanded of England, and to gain time, attempts were made to deceive your Majesty by vain declarations; scruples were alleged upon some of the consequences of the war when none were entertained upon war itself, which breaks all ties.——In vain did your Majesty, deigning to condescend to these pretended scruples modify your first demands—the same refusals were renewed—Portugal made promises, but delayed the execution under different pretexts. At one time it was the Prince of Beira, a child of twelve years, who was to be sent to the Brazils to defend that colony—at another time it was a squadron expected from the Mediterranean, which it was wished to have in safety in the Tagus.—Thus Portugal, embarrassed in her artifices, making with the Court of London engagements, real and useful to the English, with France, vague and pretended engagements, waited for succours and advice from England, sought to delay the measures of the cabinet, and, humiliating herself before both, blindly committed to the chance of events, the interests, perhaps the existence of a nation, which unanimously desired her not to give them up to a power so fatal to all its allies.—The epoch which your Majesty had fixed for the expected determination, which you had consented to prolong for a month, arrived. Portugal decided her own fate. She broke off her last connections with the continent, by reducing the French and Spanish legations to the necessity of quitting Lisbon.—Portugal has placed herself in a state of war with France, notwithstanding the benevolent disposition of your Majesty towards her. War with Portugal is a painful but necessary duty.—The interest of the continent, from whence the English ought to be excluded, forces your Majesty to declare it. Longer delay would only place Lisbon in the hands of the English.

Second Report, made Jan. 2, 1808. *Published Jan.* 24.

His Excellency recals to the recollection of his Majesty how necessary were the active and vigilant measures which have been taken, and so well seconded, by the rapidity of the march of the French troops—Portugal only sequestered the English goods when the English were secure from that measure, which Portugal did not even affect to execute.—She concerted her flight with the English; and a little while before we received the news of it, a courier had carried to Italy, where the Emperor then was, new protestations of attachment to the common cause of the continent. He announced the return of M. de Lema, who had not quitted Lisbon, and the arrival of the ambassador extraordinary, M. de Marialva, probably the dupe, as was the courier, of the bad faith of her court.——Portugal is at length delivered from the yoke of England; your Majesty occupies it with your troops—it had been left defenceless on the sea side, and a part of the cannon on her coasts had been spiked. Thus England menaces her at present, blockades her ports, and would lay waste her shores. Spain has had fears for Cadiz—she has had fears for Ceuta. It is against that part of the world that the English appear to wish to direct their secret expeditions. They have embarked troops at Gibraltar—they have recalled from that quarter those which had been driven from the Levant, and a part of those which they had accumulated in the city. Their cruizers on the coast of Spain become more vigilant, and seem to wish to revenge upon that kingdom the reverses they have experienced in the Spanish colonies. All the peninsula deserves to fix particularly the attention of your Majesty.

Report of the Minister of War on the Measures taken by France under the present circumstances.—6th Jan.

Your Majesty ordered me to form the first and second corps of observation of the Gironde. The first of those corps, commanded by General Junot, has conquered Portugal. The head of the second is ready to follow the first, if circumstances require it. Your Majesty, whose vigilance is never at fault, wished the corps of observation of the ocean, confided to Marshal Moncey, to be in the third line.

(To be continued.)

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